

Grammar teaching: what? how? And why?

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SPELT Post-Conference
Institute
3 hrs



The session



Starter:

- Warmer – grammar tennis / what is grammar?

Main course:

- Types of grammar
- Lesson structures for teaching grammar

Dessert:

- Grammar practice tasks

Grammar tennis:



a) Is this
'grammar'?

b) Is this
useful?

I am going

You are going

He is going

We are going

They are going

a) Is this 'grammar'? b) Is this useful?

I would like to visit
my daughter in
Australia.

You would like to
pick up a few new
ideas about
teaching grammar.

My husband would
like to come to
Pakistan.

We would like to
be able to apply
the new ideas to
our teaching.

They would like us
to leave the
building on time
today.

| 'I wish

Tell a few people around you about what you wish - about NOW and about the PAST

eg.

I wish I didn't need so much sleep.

I wish there was no corruption.

I wish it wasn't quite so hot.

I wish I had come to Pakistan years ago.

I wish

Start every class with a class-generated grammar pattern:

Yesterday I

One day, I'd really like to

I love but I really hate ...

If I hadn't come to school/college today, I'd be ...

Tomorrow I'm going to ...

In five years' time, I think I'll be ...

Can you and your learners do this?

Teachers might need:

Freedom to go 'off-syllabus'

Confidence to trust it will work

Belief that learners can and will participate

Learners might need:

Own ideas

Confidence to express own and others' ideas

Independence

Ability to personalise language

5 initials of
people in
each circle:



- a) What are all these different types of grammar?
- b) Which do we want our learners to learn?

- Prescriptive grammar
- Grammar of spoken English
- Grammar of standard British English
- De-contextualised grammar
- Descriptive grammar
- Grammar of written English
- Grammar of local variety of English
- Contextualised grammar

Now to the HOW – how can we teach grammar?:

What's the difference between these two?:

Inductive
grammar
teaching

Deductive
grammar
teaching

Inductive or deductive? Which works best?

1) Here's today's grammar:

'I wish + past simple' to want to change a present state

Eg.

I wish I was on the beach

I wish I had black hair

I wish I lived in El Salvador

Now write some more sentences

2) What is he thinking?:



- Model sentence
- Concept check questions
- Stress marking and drilling
- Controlled / restricted practice
- Freer practice / personalisation

Let's look at a sequence of a contextualised grammar lesson:

Grammar focus: Passives

- Structure of lesson?
- Context(s)?

ACTIVE VOICE



Wild penguins
attacked my sister.

action subject

PASSIVE VOICE



subject action
My sister was attacked
by wild penguins.



What are the stories?
Which countries are they from?

Which country?

1. This country is protected by 10m fences, water and guards.
2. Many trees have been planted to protect against tsunamis.
3. People were arrested for killing elephants and rhinos.
4. 69 indigenous languages are spoken on one island.
5. Women have been discriminated against and abused for many years.
6. Far too many people have been put in prison for drug offences.
7. Young people, aged 8 – 16 are being trained to shoot and use weapons.
8. Boys hope they will be invited to travel and show their ninja skills.
9. Migrants have not been allowed to continue on their journey.
10. 17,000 homes were carried away in monsoon floods.

Check: [https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Short stories from around the world: 2016](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Short_stories_from_around_the_world: 2016)

Look back at the 10 sentences (last slide) and discuss:

1/ Which grammar structure is included in all 18 sentences?

2/ Underline the example(s) in each sentence.

3/ Are all the examples the same? How are they different?

4/ Why is this grammar structure used?

The Passive

1. This country is protected by 10m fences, water and guards.
2. Many trees have been planted to protect against tsunamis.
3. People were arrested for killing elephants and rhinos.
4. 69 indigenous languages are spoken on one island.
5. Women have been discriminated against and abused for many years.
6. Far too many people have been put in prison for drug offences.
7. Young people, aged 8 – 16 are being trained to shoot and use weapons.
8. Boys hope they will be invited to travel and show their ninja skills.
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Learner discovery from looking at examples:

Find examples in the 10 sentences of:

- 1/ Present simple passive
- 2/ Present continuous passive
- 3/ Past simple passive
- 4/ Present perfect passive
- 5/ Future simple passive
- 6/ A negative passive

The Passive: Who/what does what to who/what?

eg. **a) The country is protected by fences, water and guards.**

b) 1,000 people were arrested.

c) Trees have been studied.

Who/what (subject)	does what (action)	to who/what (object)
a) Fences/water/guards	protect	the country
b) Police ???	arrested	1,000 people
c) Scientists???	have studied	trees

In pairs, continue the table with the other examples from the 10 sentences – you can read the mini-texts again to find out ‘who/what does what to who/what?’.

Practice / activation / production / groupwork:

**Choose 10 more stories to write
passive sentences about from this
link – more short news stories from 2015:**

<https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/2015: news from around the world>

Check all the passive sentences:

- Have part of the verb 'to be'
- Have a past participle (check: regular or irregular?)
- Make sense! (check back: who/what does what to who/what?)



- a) What are they?
- b) Do we use them?
- c) Which are most useful?
- d) Match the lesson to the approach:

PPP

ESA

TTT

TBA



PPP – Presentation, Practice, Production Advantages and disadvantages?

- <https://scottthornbury.wordpress.com/2011/01/16/p-is-for-ppp/>

PPP

Presentation: in context of my past habits when I was a child: 'used to + infinitive'. Check form / structure, meaning (with concept check questions) and pronunciation (drill and mark stress)

Practice: Pairs write at least 10 sentences using target structure from photos of Karachi 100 years ago. Check.

Production: Role-play – famous local person interviewed by local radio about childhood. Post task error correction.

TTT

Test: pairs interview each other for local radio about what Pakistan was like 20 years ago

Teach: with some learner language from interviews, guide class to focus on form, meaning (concept check questions) and pronunciation (drilling) of 'used to + infinitive'. If necessary, give more practice eg. pairs write 10 sentences from old photos

Test: learners in pairs, write up the interviews from beginning of lesson to create a class magazine 'Pakistan 20 years ago'

TTT – Test, Teach, Test

- 1/ groups of 3 discuss and fill in at least 10 predictions on a timeline (2018 – 2030)
- 2/ T writes examples of future tenses to board and guides learners to self/peer correction. Further clarification and practice of specific tenses where needed.
- 3/ learners in different groups of 3 tell others about their predictions from stage 1 and agree on 6

TBA – Task-Based Approach

- 1/ groups of 3 to hold a planning meeting for a business of their choice to plan, predict sales and outcomes for 2018 – 2030. Groups present their ideas to class.
- 2/ T plays a recording of competent speakers doing the same task and guides learners to focus on target language (eg. future tenses). Clarification and practice where necessary.
- 3/ Repeat of stage 1 in different groups, this time holding a planning meeting for their school / college

ESA – Engage, Study Activate

vs PPP, TTT, TBA?

Engage: get groups to predict front page world news items, then display : <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world> , or local alternative, to check which group predicted most correctly

Study: class choose one news item – elicit criticism of action: X should have + past participle. Clarify form/structure, drill, mark stress, concept check. Elicit more examples, related to the other front page news items, and/or related to national / local news items. Guide and elicit correction until learners can use the structure.

Activate: learners each write down 5 mistakes they've made or missed opportunities. In groups of 4 or 5, they take turns to tell the others their list, and the others criticise action and suggest alternatives.



Grammar practice:

How much?

How often?

Alone or in pairs or groups?

How structured?

Mechanical or meaningful?

On paper or paperless?

How important are errors and correction?

What's your favourite grammar practice task?



What's more
important?:
**form or
meaning?**

Background theory:

SFL – Systemic Functional Linguistics
(M. Halliday 1961)

Function of language (what language does, and how it does it), is much more important than structure.

eg. Context: Field (what is going on), Tenor (the social roles and relationships between the participants), and the Mode (aspects of the channel of communication)

and Semantics / pragmatics

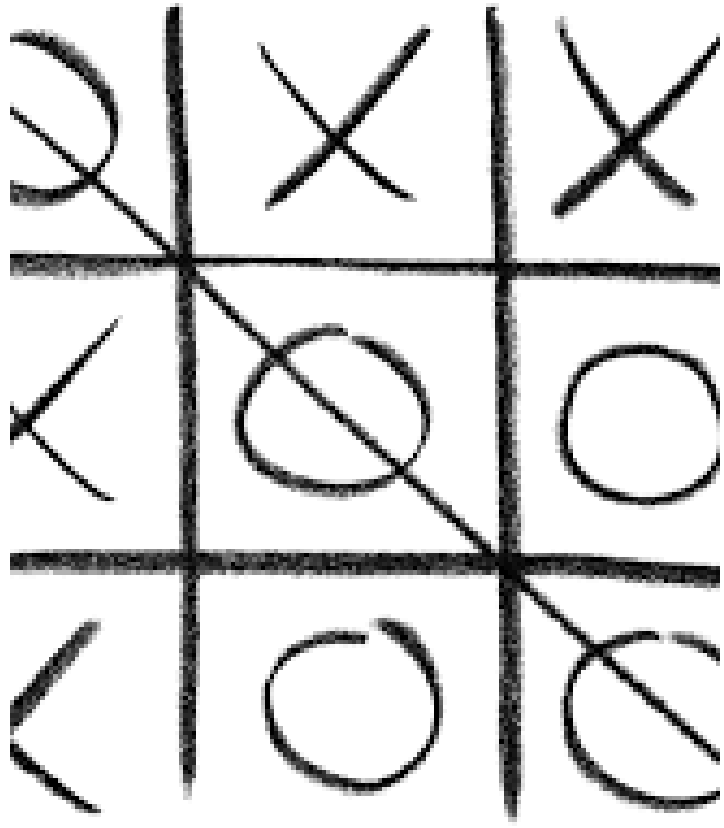
>>>> computational linguistics

Creative Automaticity

(Gatbonton, E. & Segalowitz, N. 1988)

‘The techniques for this approach are designed to provide students with ample opportunities for repetition and practice within a wholly communicative context, without the shortcomings usually characteristic of pattern drills or other more traditional methods.’

Can you explain....?



- Find someone who
- Group true/false dictation
- Spot the difference
- Noughts and crosses

In groups of 3:
Create a meaningful, contextualised
grammar practice task that you
could use in class
with your learners.
SHARE!!



Questions?

Contact me: lindaruas@hotmail.com

- Materials / ideas / visuals from **Easier English wiki New Internationalist:**

https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Main_Page

- Interested in Global Issues?: join **IATEFL GISIG** <http://gisig.iatefl.org/>

My books:

- 'Why Global Issues?'

<http://gisig.iatefl.org/uncategorized/why-global-issues-by-linda-ruas>

- 'Global Justice in Easier English'

<http://ethicalshop.org/global-justice-in-easier-english.html>